

Winkle Counseling and Family Wellness

Parent & Custody Evaluations

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AGREEMENT TO PARENTING EVALUATION

Purpose:

This agreement is designed to help assure that I am able to develop recommendations that are in the best interest of your child or children involved and to help you understand the parenting evaluation process. If you have any questions, after reviewing this agreement, please feel free to discuss them with me at your initial interview. You understand that this evaluation is for legal purposes and I cannot be a resource to you or anyone else involved in the case for advice, therapy, or support. Any of these activities conflict with my role as a neutral evaluator. You also understand that your child or children are my only clients.

Cost Estimate

Cost is difficult to predict and does vary with the complexity of issues as well as the number of parties involved. ***It does not include court testimony.*** The initial start cost is *estimated* at \$3000.00. If any additional psychological testing is required, it will be at the expense of each party or as designated by the court and is not covered in the estimated cost. A payment of \$1500.00 is due before the evaluation will begin. Your payment of \$1500.00 must be received before the evaluation can start. This is considered a partial pre-payment and includes:

- All face to face contact
- Phone calls
- Consultations with attorneys and other professionals involved with the case
- Records review
- Collateral interviews
- Written parenting plan recommendations sent to your attorney
- Criminal background checks

The final balance will be billed prior to the written being released and the balance must be paid before the written report is released.

Timeframe:

Once partial payment of the initial fee of \$1500.00 is received, the interviews will normally be scheduled with family members within two weeks. The evaluation will normally take approximately 6 to 8 weeks to complete and the written evaluation with recommendations will be sent to both party's attorneys.

The custody and parenting time evaluation will begin when I receive from both parties:

1. Signed Agreement to Parenting Evaluation
2. Completed Self-report
3. Payment of estimated initial fees
4. Release of Information
5. Release for Criminal History Check

Confidentially

You understand by agreeing to this evaluation you are waiving confidentiality and releasing the evaluator from any and all liability for damages that might result from the release of information. You recognize that my recommendations, statements, reports, testimony and other actions might be adverse and detrimental to you personally, financially, and to your legal position.

You understand that the evaluator will consider each child's interest over any adult's interest. You understand that anything discussed between any child and the evaluator will remain confidential unless a court of law determines otherwise. Please do not ask your child or children to tell you what they discussed with the evaluator during the ongoing evaluation process.

Evaluation & Written Recommendation

You understand the evaluation will consist of interviews with each parent, each child, observations of each parent with their children, and other family members if needed. Children will be interviewed in each parent’s home. The parent interviews will also take place in their home. Parents will provide no more than two personal reference collateral contacts each. The evaluator typically obtains releases of information to consult with daycare providers, school personnel and teachers. Other collateral interviews with other professionals involved with your family may also occur. The evaluation will also include criminal background checks of each parent.

Reports will be written in a non-adversarial manner, focusing on the needs of the child or children, the parents’ capacities to parent, the history of the parenting, and a recommendation matching the need with capacities and providing the least disruption for the children. The report will focus on the parental strengths, not weaknesses, and will be written in a sensitive manner recognizing that the report will be shared with the parents and third parties. A copy written recommendations will be sent to each party’s attorney.

Court Testimony

Costs of my participation beyond the written recommendations will normally be at the expense of the party requesting the subsequent court proceedings. The hourly rate for court costs is \$200.00 per hour. The court retains the authority to apportion costs between parties. Expenses can include time for court preparation, travel, waiting time, and court time. The party requesting the subsequent court proceedings will be given an estimate of my court testimony costs and it will need to be paid prior to the trial court date. *No exceptions will be made.*

You are signing this agreement and acknowledge that you understand it and agree to its conditions and terms.

Signature of Party

Date

Copy to client given on _____
Date

by _____
Representative